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ABSTRACT

A study examined how three major women's magazines handled cigarette advertisements and editorial copy about smoking-related health problems. Examined were issues of "Ms.," "Good Housekeeping," and "Seventeen" magazines from 1972, one year after the ban on television advertisements and the year "Ms." began publication, through 1979, when cigarette advertising in women's magazines peaked, and coverage of the smoking issue peaked in general. Content analyses, related literature, and telephone interviews with editors revealed that "Good Housekeeping" ran an average of 2.1 informative stories on the health risks of smoking, and has a long-standing policy of not accepting cigarette advertising. "Seventeen" ran an average of one smoking-related article every 2 years, and also accepts no cigarette ads. "Ms." magazine ran an average of 5.7 health-related articles per year, but no feature articles related to smoking, although it maintains that its editorial content is independent of its advertising. All but three issues contained cigarette ads, but the editors have turned down lucrative advertising from Virginia Slims cigarettes because its slogan "You've Come a Long Way, Baby" is considered demeaning to women. Every cigarette ad carries the Surgeon General's warning, however, and "Ms." still runs fewer cigarette ads than other women's magazines, such as "Cosmopolitan" or "Working Mother." Overall, it appears that editorial autonomy for women's magazines disappears when magazines are dependent on advertising revenues. (A chart of magazine revenues and a graph illustrating the total number of articles on smoking are appended. Forty-four notes are included.) (HTH)

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Women's Magazines, Cigarette Advertisements, Health Articles and Editorial Autonomy

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1987

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY--OR HAVE YOU?

Women's Magazines, Cigarette Advertisements, Health Articles and Editorial Autonomy

Including 1972-1979 Content Analyses of Three Major Women's Magazines

by Vicki Hesterman

"You've come a long way, Baby!" declares a well-known cigarette advertisement, featuring attractive, assertive, healthy-looking women. This particular ad, still visible in many women's magazines, celebrates the emancipation of women from moral and legal restraints against smoking. The "Baby" ad certainly does not stand alone; an increasing number of tobacco companies direct their pitches to working women, considering them good targets because they are under stress. (1) Cigarette advertisements always portray women favorably, and rarely in passive or traditional roles. Many young women still see smoking as a symbol of independence or defiance. (2) Most major women's magazines accept these advertisements, and have done so since

long before the 1971 ban on television advertising of tobacco. After the ban, tobacco companies began to rely even more heavily on the print media for publicity. (3)

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study concerns how three major women's magazines, Ms., Good Housekeeping, and Seventeen, handled cigarette ads and editorial copy about serious health problems related to smoking, particularly among women, who have been smoking in ever-increasing numbers during the past 15 years. The research begins in 1972, one year after the ban on television advertisements and the year Ms. magazine began publication. The study runs through 1979, about the time cigarette advertising in women's magazines--some with target audiences of 20 million--peaked, with up to 20 ads in a single issue. (4) This is the same time that magazine coverage of the smoking issue also peaked, although not generally in the same magazines that carried tobacco ads. (See appendix B).

There are numerous related issues worth examining. Did these magazines accurately report the latest findings on major health problems of the seventies, particularly those directly related to women? Were any subjects, such as smoking dangers, noticeably absent? If editorial autonomy was a reality, why would magazines omit such coverage? Which magazines did not carry tobacco ads, and why didn't they? Did magazines that carried ads also carry editorial warnings about health dangers? Are editors and publishers of such magazines in any way responsible for the increased social acceptance, and resultant higher death rates, of women smokers? Is pressure from tobacco advertisers, as well as a proposed ban on such advertising, threatening to freedom of the press?

Conclusions will be based on related literature, telephone interviews with magazine editors, and content analyses of three women's magazines, Ms., Good Housekeeping and Seventeen. (See Appendix A). Because studying all major women's magazines would be a formidable task, these three were chosen for the content analysis. Seventeen is targeted at high school girls (some tobacco critics suggest this age group is a prime target of tobacco companies); Ms. represents feminist working women of all ages, and Good Housekeeping is targeted to more traditional women with families. These three magazines have high enough circulations and interest levels to be listed in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Medical research reveals exactly how far the "Baby" featured in magazine cigarette ads has come. Forty thousand American women now die of lung cancer each year, and the numbers are growing. For the first time in history, more females are dying of lung cancer than breast cancer. Ten years ago, the ratio of male to female lung-cancer patients was eight to one. Today, it is 1.5 to 1. Some new studies suggest that women are physiologically more sensitive to nicotine than are men; once a woman becomes addicted to smoking, she may have a more difficult time quitting. (5)

Thirty percent of all American women and twenty percent of female high school seniors smoke. The rate of smoking has increased most among women aged twenty to thirty-four. Lung

cancer is the most serious problem facing women smokers, but heart disease, fetal death, child deformity and developmental delays, early menopause, emphysema, and infertility also strike tobacco victims. (6)

Surgeon General C. Everett Koop said in 1982, "Cigarette smoking is clearly identified as the chief preventable cause of death in our society and the most important public health issue of our time." Statistics show that nearly 350,000 Americans--more than all those killed in twentieth-century wars--die each year from smoking-related causes.

These problems striking smokers are not new; medical and scientific journals have for years reported the increasing number of women smoking, and dying of smoking-related causes. Any astute consumer magazine editor or publisher could hardly plead ignorance of the issue. Syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman recently reported that there have been more than 50,000 medical citations linking cigarettes and health; a well-informed magazine decision-maker would most likely be aware of at least some of them.

Most people depend on mass media, not medical or scientific journals, for their major source of information on the smoking and health issue. (7) Readers who only have time for one or two magazines may miss important new information if their favorite publications choose to downplay smoking research.

Given the facts, it would seem logical that women's magazines would run frequent articles about the latest medical findings on the effects of smoking. The editorial autonomy claimed by most magazine staffs would suggest that tobacco advertisements would have no influence on editorial treatment

of the smoking and disease issue.

However, magazine editorial autonomy may be at best a constant struggle and at worst, a mere myth. John Mack Carter, editor-in-chief of Good Housekeeping recently commented that the even though his magazine insisted on autonomy, separation of editorial and advertising interests was a big problem among most consumer magazines. (8) While magazines still struggle with the issue, recent studies by the Society of Professional Journalists and the American Society of Newspaper Editors show that newspaper and broadcast journalists are increasingly sensitive to public opinion on such things as separation of editorial and advertising interests, and most take great care to maintain autonomy. (9) Despite this care by newspaper and broadcast media to maintian separation, a 1985 study of 100 top consumer magazines showed that 49 percent of editors felt some pressure from advertising offices, and 2 percent said they felt considerable pressure. (10) (It must be noted that the content analysis was done covering the years 1972-1979, and these studies were done in the mid-eighties. The time gap might slightly affect editorial responses.)

Setting the questions of editorial responsibility and journalistic ethics aside momentarily, the mere fact that smoking directly affects and thus interests women would make such articles seem editorially justifiable. Whether magazine gatekeepers (decision-makers) maintain that they should provide an audience with what it needs, what it wants or some of each, health articles about smoking would seem to qualify as good copy.

The importance of running articles an audience needs, sometimes at the expense of what it wants, is what the Hutchins Commission had in mind in 1947 when it called for news presented in "a context which gives it meaning," intimating that media consumers don't always have enough information to know what they need to know.

Whether an editor would make a decision based on audience needs or on audience wants, there would seem to be little justification for ignoring the dangers of smoking. Because most women's magazines have traditionally emphasized health articles, it would seem that the decade following the Surgeon General's warning and restrictions on tobacco advertising would bring numerous women's magazine articles about the dangers of smoking.

When cigarette ads were banned from television, R. C. Smith, reporting to Columbia Journalism Review, was unable to find, in magazines that subsequently accepted such ads, a single article that "would have given readers any clear notion of the nature and extent of the medical and social havoc wreaked by the cigarette-smoking habit." (11)

Because Ms. was not established (as an insert in New York magazine) until December 1971, just after the ban on television tobacco commercials, the content analyses begin in 1972 (the first regular issue of Ms. was dated July 1972). They continue through the end of the decade, one in which medical journals paid considerable attention to the hazards of smoking, as did a few popular magazines. (12)

Each of the three magazine staffs was contacted for interviews and explanations of past and present policies. Executive editor Mina

Mulvey of Good Housekeeping, public information spokesperson Patrice Kelly of Seventeen, and editor-publisher Pat Carbine of Ms. were extremely cooperative, giving lengthy telephone interviews. Relevant statements by editors of other magazines are also cited.

Articles listed in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature under "Smoking," "Women and Smoking," "Fetal Health and Smoking," or "Women and Lung Cancer," are included in this study. The categories were selected after studying all possible relevant listings and determining that these four would cover all pertinent articles. (13) Brief comments made within the body of other articles are not included, only articles with the main emphasis being the latest reseach findings on smoking and health. Quantitative statements made in this paper are based on counts taken from Reader's Guide, these content analyses, and related studies.

CONTENT ANALYSES

Good Housekeeping

Between the years 1972 and 1979, Good Housekeeping ran an average of 11.2 health-related articles per year. Seventeen of those articles, or 2.1 per year, were mainly concerned with the dangers of smoking.

Some of the articles appearing during that time were entitled: "New Findings About Carbon Monoxide--Health

Consequences of Smoking" (September 1972); "How Stop-Smoking Clinics Work" (October 1973); "Growing Risks that Women Smokers Face" (April 1975); "Deadly New Facts About Women and Smoking" (February 1977), and "Women and Cigarettes: The Deadly New Evidence" (November 1978).

The issue of women and smoking risks were repeatedly brought to the attention of the readers. Even the headlines were provocative and informative. Those issues of Good Housekeeping did not contain any tobacco advertisements.

Mina Mulvey, Good Housekeeping executive editor, was already on staff with the magazine during the seventies. She explains that the magazine has long had a policy against accepting cigarette advertising: "One of our early editors, William Bigelow, was against smoking, and so was Dr. Harvey Wiley, the father of the Food and Drug Act. Dr. Wiley became the first director of the group that put the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval on products we endorsed. He always felt smoking was deleterious to health; there were articles about it back then already. In the twenties and early thirties there was some cigarette advertising in Good Housekeeping, but the policy was adopted in the mid-thirties and there have been no tobacco ads to this day."

Mulvey says that the magazine does not accept cigarette advertisements because of the health risks to readers. She adds that it has not been a financial strain, because the magazine has never depended on such revenue: "We haven't relied on it over the years, so we may have a benefit. We fought harder for healthier ads. We are a very healthy magazine."

According to Mulvey, Good Housekeeping was number one in

1985 in advertising revenue in America for monthly publications, despite having no tobacco advertisements.

On the question of editorial autonomy, Mulvey says articles have never been run to please advertisers, but "it's a constant battle to maintain editorial and advertising separation. If you've run a negative article about something, advertisers will generally want to wait a few months before running ads."

Good Housekeeping doesn't have a policy to regularly run articles about smoking, Mulvey says. "We run news whenever it appears. There's enough going on in that area of journalistic importance to warrant frequent articles." (14)

John Mack Carter, executive editor of the magazine, says: "What needs to be studied in magazine ethics is the freedom of magazine staffs from business office pressure--to choose subjects they want and present material as they find it. The practices don't always agree with the policies."

He adds that he sees a definite correlation between stories about cancer and cigarette smoking and whether or not a magazine takes tobacco advertising. (15)

Seventeen

From 1972 through 1979, Seventeen magazine published an average of 2.2 health-related articles per year, including four featured articles about the effects of smoking on health, or an average of one smoking article every two years.

Seventeen accepted no tobacco advertisments, even though its audience of young women is a prime target for cigarette companies. (16)

Smoking article titles included the following: "Non-smokers Have Rights, Too!" (September 1973); "How I Quit Smoking" (September 1974), and "Smoking--My Painless (Almost) Way of Quitting" (August 1976).

A public information spokesperson for Seventeen, Patrice Kelly, said that the editor-in-chief makes the final decision as to what articles will run in the magazine.

"We do not accept cigarette or alcohol advertising because of the age of our readers and the position of the magazine to promote good health among teens. We encourage good health and well-roundedness of teens and want to raise their consciousness about health issues like smoking." (17)

Ms.

Ms. published an average of 5.7 health articles per year, including a semi-regular column entitled "Woman's Body, Woman's Mind," during the years 1972-1979. It published no featured articles related to smoking during the entire period. Nearly every other type of health concern was addressed. Some of the articles included: "Do You Have 'Tooth Fur'" (May 1973); "Danger in the Sun--Skin Cancer" (July 1973); "Afterthoughts on the Morning After Pil" (November 1973); "Vaginitis" (May 1974); "News about Breast Cancer" (March 1975); "The New Pill Scare--Important Research from England" (June 1975); "Dying of Thinness" (August 1976); "Herpes" (January 1978), and "Are You Overdosing on Vitamins?" (August 1978). Given the wide range of health topics covered, it is obvious that this is a magazine that realizes its readers care about their health. The complete absense of smoking-related articles

stands out. The magazine doesn't fail to mention the issue occasionally, within the body of another article (on pregnancy, for instance), but no articles centering on smoking were featured.

While all but three issues of Ms. (January, February and April of 1974) contained tobacco ads of various types, only one Virginia Slims "You've Come a Long Way, Baby" ad ran, in the November 1972 issue. Because the editors felt the slogan was demeaning to women, they turned down later lucrative offers from Virginia Slims. (18)

Other tobacco advertisements, nearly all of which contained attractive women or couples, included such copy as: "FOR MORE OF A WOMAN...You demand a little more of things...like a job that's nothing less than a challenge. A Calvin Klein steamer coat that's nothing less than smashing. And your Premium length Salem. That's just your style...MORE OF A SALEM" (November 1984); "Lady, Be Cool" (Kool, June 1975).

In the mid-seventies, some of the ads began to concede that there was an uproar about health risks. Winston came out with "If I'm Going to Smoke, I'm Going to do it Right." (March 1975). Vantage produced "Should People Smoke?" with a long explanation saying, basically, maybe you shouldn't but you will, and since you will, why not smoke Vantage? (February 1976). True came up with "Considering all I heard, I decided to either quit or smoke True. I smoke True." (September 1975). All the models are attractive, young and healthy-looking.

Ms. editors explain that they believe in giving readers the right to decide whether or not to smoke. In an early issue, a

reader wrote, inquiring why Ms. advertised cigarettes. The unsigned staff answer:

"There is a clear warning on the package and in the ads that smoking is dangerous. After some consideration, it seemed to us that the reader had the right to make the choice." (19)

In the same article, two pages later, the writer told readers, "Indeed, if we made any single discovery in the almost three years since we began, it is just that: its (advertising) importance as a socializing force." (20) This statement seemed to indicate that the editors realized that advertising products in trusted publications helped make such products socially acceptable.

The special report to readers, entitled "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Advertising and Were Not Afraid to Ask," explained the magazine's policy about accepting advertisments. The writer criticized more traditional women's magazines for "encouraging women to spend money" on products as a main purpose of the magazine. Ms. promised to maintain a higher editorial content than most women's magazines, and kept that promise.

The staff of Ms. decided to be careful about accepting certain ads, because they didn't want to "talk down" to their readers. "But we learned an important fact," the article continued, "Women readers were willing to take advertising very seriously indeed, if it was contained in a publication they trusted, one that honored their intelligence." (21)

On the subject of editorial control, Ms. promised "no hidden rewards for advertisers and no backing off certain subjects because advertisers would--or we thought they might--object.

Accuracy, to the best of our ability, was the point." (22)

Five years later, Gloria Steinem wrote an update on the progress of the magazine. She reported that total readership was then two million, more than Harper's. She also maintained that Ms. had editorial autonomy: "Our editorial copy is also independent of ads in a way that's untraditional and probably still an exception. It's a remaining double standard of the magazine world, for instance, that publications are expected to offer supportive editorial copy, to complement ads for such products as clothes, food or cosmetics." (23) Ms. has an offical policy against accepting ads that demean women or are potentially dangerous. The Virginia Slims ad was turned down not on the basis of danger, but because it was demeaning.

Pat Carbine, editor and publisher of Ms., explained in a telephone interview that "We have over the period of our history, reported a minimum of a dozen times on the hazards of combining smoking with the pill, or pregnancy. We also recently reported that lung cancer had surpassed breast cancer in women."

When asked why Ms. did not run a single major article on the hazards of smoking during the seventies, Carbine said, "Those were the years we were doing wonderful work on various forms of contraception. And we would say, for instance, that pill takers should not smoke."

Carbine says that part of the reason Ms. has been open to accepting cigarette advertisments may be because a number of the editors at Ms. use cigarettes themselves: "A number of us smoke. A number of us smoke and do not inhale--Steinem and Carbine fall

into that category."

Ms. has long made the claim that it will not run any ad that is demeaning or potentially dangerous, which Carbine acknowledges. She cites an example of a dangerous product as feminine hygiene deodorants, because "they can be injurious and do not carry warning labels. The fact that cigarettes can be injurious is heralded in every ad."

She, too, mentions the infamous "You've Come a Long Way, Baby" Virginia Slims campaign. "Because we only ran that ad once, Phillip Morris has chosen not to run any of their other brands in Ms." That stand, taken because readers and editors objected to a phrase that demeaned women and wasn't true, has been costly for Ms. but one the staff felt strongly enough about to take.

Does editorial autonomy exist, or does Ms. feel pressure from tobacco companies to maintain silence on smoking dangers. On the question of feeling pressure, Carbine says "That is not true; at least it hasn't been true for us." She adds, though, that tobacco advertisers were forewarned about a February 1987 cover story on women and addiction, including short pieces on men, compulsive shopping, smoking, drinking and eating as addictions.

"I'll say to the cigarette folks, 'This is an issue we feel is important--you may want to sit it out'," she explains. "We let advertisers know in advance if we run a piece that may reflect negatively on their product. I want them to have a positive experience. It's professional courtesy to let them know."

The magazine runs tobacco advertisements both as a philosophical choice and for financial considerations, according to Carbine. She says the audience is intelligent and well-read, and the

magazine's omission of cigarette warning articles does not mean it ignores the issue.

"The essential facts are right there on the cigarette ads, in the warnings. An intelligent reader, which we demonstrably have, it seems to me, can make a choice."

Because a complete ban on tobacco advertisements is a future possibility, Ms. is now instituting what Carbine terms "Phase II:"

> Our initial thrust in advertisments was to go to new products not traditionally seen in women's magazines, such as credit cards, cameras, services, banks. We made our point, and now are going more to more traditional women's products such as apparel, food, health and beauty aids. We want to cover them editorially in a different way; we will not promise supportive copy such as recipes and beauty make-overs,as most women's magazines do. We have been hard at work implementing Phase II, and that would also protect us if there is a ban on cigarette advertising. (24)

Despite these goals and explanations, Ms. maintained its virtual silence on the smoking issue all during the seventies, a decade when doctors and other publications were warning women of the dangers. The Reader's Guide lists from ten to thirty-seven smoking articles per year in other publications during that time. While Ms. didn't accept many cigarette advertisements (even Working Mother averaged more ads per issue), the magazine with the goal of helping women fulfill themselves and be all they could be didn't warn them that many of them might be killing themselves.

Launched on the wave of the feminist movement, Ms. raised the consciousness of millions of American women, voicing the opinion loud and clear that life goes on with or without husband and children, that careers count, and that women can have "it all" if they want it. Staffed by some of the most outspoken leaders of the

feminist movement, Ms. promised, both literally and figuratively, to tackle tough subjects of all kinds, yet in essence ignored a major danger to women. Results of the study indicate that this is at least partially because of financial considerations; Ms. maintains close editorial-advertising contacts, at least with tobacco advertisers. The fact that many staff members are smokers may also influence the magazine's philosophical stand on the issue.

RELATED INFORMATION

A general examination of other women's magazines shows that most women's magazines carry cigarette advertisements, and Ms. actually runs relatively few (3.9 per issue in 1984, compared to 6.3 in Working Mother). Cosmopolitan, for instance, runs numerous such ads and makes no apologies for it. As 25-year sales veteran Tony Diodato says, "Cosmo has always accepted tobacco and alcohol ads--we've got no hang-ups about it. We don't do major articles about smoking; there may be something in a health column, but basically, we're in the business of pleasure." (25)

Acquiring Editor Barbara Creaturo of Cosmopolitan, when asked why the magazine ran so many tobacco ads but virtually no articles about the dangers of smoking to women, replied only, "I think you can draw the obvious conclusion."

"If you read Cosmo carefully, it's there, though, within columns, and articles on pregnancy," she adds. "We try to be responsible to the readers without antagonizing advertisers.

"I do not believe that advertising cigarettes is responsible

for people's habits. You have to live in a hole not to know the dangers of smoking. The social pressure to smoke is very intense."

Creaturo herself says she is a smoker, although executive editor Helen Gurley Brown is not, "But I feel like a social pariah. Not many people in these circles smoke anymore."

Creaturo was asked if a unified effort by all major magazines to run articles despite advertisers' reactions would work to relieve some of the editorial pressure. She replied that she didn't think it had ever been tried, and that it might work. She declined further comment on the subject. (26)

ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL INFLUENCE ON READERS

Numerous studies have shown that advertising does change images and what people consider desirable and acceptable. A powerful force, clever advertising can affect people's perception of themselves and others. (27)

After researching coverage of the smoking issue in American magazines, Fred Paine concluded that "portraying tobacco use in films and advertising encouraged social acceptance of smoking, particularly among women. Anti-cigarette commercials and media acknowledgement of the validity of scientific studies condemning cigarette smoking discouraged it." He adds that advertising also provides reassurance for the smoker: "who would expect the happy, attractive young people in the ads to die prematurely of lung

cancer or heart disease?" (28)

The image of smokers as young and healthy persists. "People don't start smoking because it tastes good," says Matthew Myers of the Coalition on Smoking and Health. "They start because the cigarette manufacturers have succeeded in making cigarette smokers the image of what young people want to be." (29)

Media researchers Simon Chapman and Garry Egger contend that advertising is often used "to promote and sell products and services which in the long term may be harmful to human health." They suggest that if people can be convinced to take up smoking by advertising, perhaps using it to promote health can persuade them to give up the habit. (30)

Not one to mince words, author and New Yorker staff writer Thomas Whiteside calls the tobacco industry's huge advertising campaigns "manslaughter on a massive scale," and says "the press as a whole has been undeterred from acting as co-conspirators in this manslaughter for the sake of whatever additional profits publishers have been able to seize as a result of the ban on cigarette commercials on the air." (31)

Even if tobacco companies don't actually exert direct pressure on editors and publishers, it's there, according to a 1982 Wall Street Journal article by Janet Guyon. Smaller publications may engage in self-censorship, and the considerable revenue generated by cigarette advertisements make some magazines and newspapers "tread lightly," "tone down," or "ignore the issue" when handling the negative effects of smoking. If it weren't for the ad connection in magazines and newspapers, the

public would read much more bad news about smoking. (32)

During the past twenty years, journalists have shown more initiative in probing into social forces that affect people's lives, says media critic and journalism professor Ben Bagdikian. However, he decries the fact that the influence of advertisers and publishers' fears of offending them "have created a no-man's land of subject matter that few newspapers or magazines or broadcasters will enter," which includes land abuse in cities and public transportation crippling by the auto industry. But, he adds, "perhaps the most shameful money-induced censorship of American news media, a corruption of news that has contributed to millions of deaths is the decades-long handling of the link between tobacco and heart-lung diseases." After the AMA had banned tobacco ads from medical journals in 1953, there was no longer any justification for silence on the link between tobacco and death, says Bagdikian. (33)

Readers do depend on their favorite magazines for much of their information on smoking, as Paine found:

> Magazines have been forums for the exchange of opinions, sources of information, highlights of new ideas. In their presentation of scientific data, information on quitting as well as tobacco industry propoganda, they have had a major effect on information diffusion and probably behavior. (34)

DISCUSSION

One women's magazine editor, who offered frankness but demanded anonymity, said that there is a definite correlation between editorial copy and cigarette advertisements. "Magazines can't afford to upset the advertisers," she commented, "They

would pull their ads, and they pay a lot of money for advertisements in magazines like ours, with large circulations."

When asked what a ban on tobacco advertising would do to her magazine, she replied, "It would be devastating. A ban like that would put most magazines out of business, and be absolutely crippling to the industry as a whole." (35)

The American Medical Association, the American Lung Association and the American Cancer Society have all recently called for a total ban on cigarette advertising. Such a ban would not cripple the industry, according to a spokesperson for the information center of the Magazine Publisher's Association in New York City. She cites figures of 5.1 billion dollars spent on advertising in 1986. Of that, only 322 million came from the tobacco industry.

The automotive industry spent the most on magazine advertisements; business and consumer services were second; toiletries and cosmetics were third, and cigarettes, tobacco and accessories were sixth--a 16 percent decrease since 1985 (see Appendix A). Those figures indicate that the magazine industry could probably survive without tobacco company money. (36)

Successful magazines that do not accept tobacco ads include Seventeen, Good Housekeeping, Reader's Digest, Mother Jones and the new Saturday Evening Post.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of analyzing these three women's

magazines, comments by media professionals and critics, research by doctors and scientists, and related literature readings, it appears that editorial autonomy for women's magazines disappears when tobacco advertisements enter the picture. Magazines dependent on revenue from tobacco companies undeniably sidestepped the dangers of smoking. Magazines with policies against accepting such ads, however, were aggressive in reporting the health hazards linked to cigarettes.

Ms. magazine was either self-censored or felt pressure from tobacco companies to ignore the smoking and health issue. Ms. was far from alone; Seventeen and Good Housekeeping were among the few major women's magazines published in the seventies that did not accept tobacco advertisments.

Whether attractive tobacco advertisements actually encouraged women to smoke more, thus linking those women's magazines that accepted such ads to the increasing death rate of women smokers, has not been proven. However, when one considers all the medical evidence, the fact that advertising does influence those who see it, magazine editors' statements that they strive to win the trust of their readers, and the prediction that within a few years, women will be outsmoking men, it is tempting to suggest that magazines that accept tobacco advertisements are part of the problem. Those that accept such ads and then ignore the health issue may well be partially responsible for the increase in smoking among women.

One reason given by several magazine editors as to why they weren't more aggressively exposing the newest research about smoking dangers was that polls showed that most Americans

understood the dangers. Polls, though, are often contradictory, and should not be used as a determining factor in such an important issue. While a 1978 Roper poll showed that nine out of ten Americans knew that smoking is dangerous to a smoker, 1980 surveys by Gallup, Roper and Chilton found that thirty percent of the public was unaware of the relationship between smoking and heart disease; fifty percent of women did not know that smoking pregnancy increases the risk of stillbirth and miscarriage; forty percent of men and women didn't know that smoking causes eighty percent of the ninety-eight thousand annual lung-cancer deaths, and fifty percent of teenagers did not believe that smoking may be addictive. (37)

Pollster surveys sometimes show surprisingly different results on the same issues. This may be because of the possibility that the pollster "may choose a level of analysis that supports their own point of view." (38) With this knowledge of survey results, a concerned editor would not dismiss an important subject based on one or two polls. Besides, research by Alan Blum indicates that the more subtle ads will even cite studies--usually financed by tobacco companies--that supposedly refute evidence linking smoking with serious illnesses. (39)

Dr. Virginia Ernster, writing in the New York State Journal of Medicine, states that "cigarette smoking was initially a symbol of emancipation for women, and it has since become associated with self-destruction." She severely reprimands those who fail to help fight the war against smoking, "by their silence on the issue of tobacco company exploitation of

women, even when challenged, these representatives of the women's movement as well as publishers of women's magazines must be viewed as accomplices in what has come to be called an 'equal opportunity tragedy'." (40)

Philosopher Sissela Bok writes that the omission of essential facts is as deceitful as outright lies, and this eventually destroys trust. If a magazine runs advertisements depicting smokers as healthy, and simultaneously omits complete, up-to-date facts about the dangers of smoking, Bok would likely label that publication as one that lies to its readers. (41)

Numerous journalists are calling for a more socially responsible press, and women's magazines would fall in that category. Hodding Carter III writes that public perception of modern media sees media as serving pragmatism as king and holding few agreed-upon principles. (42)

That magazines have an impact on readers and society is undeniable. "Magazines have become a part of people's lives," writes media scholar Theodore Peterson, adding that the exposure to magazines over a lifetime probably has a profound effect on an individual and society. "The magazine by nature was admirably suited for a highly important role in a democratic society, that of introducing new ideas, putting them up for critical examination, and if they had merit, feeding them into the mainstream of thought." (43)

Those who are in charge of magazines have much power and influence, and sometimes thoughtlessly misuse this power, according to veteran magazine editor and publisher Clay Felker, who in 1969 wrote:

> (The) editor strongly shapes his magazine in his own image and creates a dynamic spirit which transmits itself to the editorial contributors, the readers and the business audience. As the saying goes, philosophy follows facts, and after something is done, perhaps it can be rationalized brilliantly--sometimes even by the editor who himself initiated the policy blindly and intuitively, acting on his biases and prejudices, and not on a carefully thought-out plan. (44)

Women's magazines in the seventies had an opportunity to inform their readers about a timely issue of great interest and importance, the dangers of tobacco. While Ms. informed its readers about nearly every other conceivable disease or health risk (with the possible exception of alcohol-related problems) it ignored the smoking issue, except in occasional subtle mentions within other stories.

Most other major women's magazines ran even more cigarette advertisements than Ms. did, with no editorial warnings. Unlike other major women's magazines, however, Ms. began publication after the dangers of smoking to women were well-documented, the Surgeon General's sobering report had been released, television commercials were banned, and various health organizations had called for a voluntary ban on print advertising. Ms. had an opportunity to take an initial stand against smoking, rather than to promote the image of assertive, attractive, healthy women smokers. Instead, a stand was taken against sexism and other potentially dangerous products.

Good Housekeeping and Seventeen, on the other hand, ran no cigarette advertisements and kept their audience well-informed about the latest research, as did Reader's Digest, Mother Jones and some other consumer magazines, serving both

reader needs and reader interests.

The proposal to ban cigarette advertisements is opposed by the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Advertising Federation, and the tobacco companies. Many other groups, including those in publishing circles, claim such a ban would be unconstitutional.

The influence of tobacco advertisers on women's magazine editors appears to have had a powerful effect on editorial autonomy, perhaps to the point of affecting journalistic responsibility. If magazines, particularly those which obviously care about the health of women readers, feel enough pressure to downplay an issue as important as new medical findings about tobacco and health, it's possible that this phenomenon has been, and is, as much a threat to freedom of speech and the press as would be a ban on such advertising.

Magazine Publishers Association 575 Lexington Avenue New York, New York 10022 212 752 0055

MPA

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING REVENUE BY CLASS TOTALS
JANUARY - DECEMBER 1986

CLASSIFICATION	ADVERTISING REVENUE JAN-DEC 86	JAN-DEC 85	% CHANGE
T100 Automotive, Automotive Accessories & Equipment	597,323,437	548,672,738	+ 8.9
B100 Business & Consumer Services	484,395,700	463,320,116	+ 4.5
D100 Toiletries & Cosmetics	390,426,964	384,805,888	+ 1.5
F100 Food & Food Products	389,484,792	342,099,080	+ 13.9
G600 Mail Order	356,977,339	327,507,759	+ 9.0
→ G100 Cigarettes, Tobacco & Accessories	* 321,843,420	383,320,241	- 16.0
A100 Apparel, Footwear & Accessories	290,957,088	250,785,202	+ 16.0
T400 Travel, Hotels & Resorts	249,475,223	245,278,622	+ 1.7
F300 Beer, Wine & Liquor	224,956,855	239,712,218	- 6.2
B300 Computer, Office Equipment & Stationery	217,740,856	250,428,876	- 13.1
B400 Publishing & Media	179,855,405	187,618,499	- 4.1
D200 Drugs & Remedies	147,718,466	134,732,303	+ 9.6
G700 Retail	146,308,813	120,975,175	+ 20.9
G200 Jewelry, Optical Goods & Cameras	113,034,766	100,881,630	+ 12.0
B200 Insurance & Real Estate	106,653,064	90,436,212	+ 17.9
H100 Household Furnishings Supplies & Materials	102,854,900	87,342,011	+ 17.8
H300 Electronic Entertainment Equipment & Supplies	95,273,010	97,846,086	- 2.6
H200 Household Equipment & Supplies	93,032,719	100,652,760	- 7.6
G800 Miscellaneous Not Itemized	92,289,020	83,565,874	+ 10.4
H500 Building Materials, Equipment & Fixtures	76,094,430	71,364,299	+ 6.6
G400 Sporting Goods, Toys & Games	75,543,823	82,567,680	- 18.5
G900 Miscellaneous Not Elsewhere Classified	58,827,890	61,232,726	- 3.9
H400 Soaps, Cleansers & Polishes	50,760,679	47,228,419	+ 7.5
F200 Confectionery, Snacks & Soft Drinks	49,292,868	52,252,607	- 5.7
B500 Industrial Materials	47,078,595	49,030,759	- 4.0
G500 Pets, Pet Foods, Supplies & Organizations	37,341,073	29,660,054	+ 25.9
B600 Freight, Industrial & Agricultural Development	35,598,150	35,048,950	+ 1.6
G300 Entertainment & Amusements	25,695,532	21,027,164	+ 22.2
T200 Gasoline, Lubricants & Fuels	20,798,890	25,985,791	- 20.0
T600 Horticulture	20,017,587	19,657,389	+ 1.8
B700 Business Proposition & Employment Recruitment	13,513,933	13,431,454	+ 0.6
T300 Airplanes, Aviation Accessories & Equipment	9,179,922	12,402,926	- 26.0
TOTALS	* 5,120,345,209	4,960,871,508	+3.2

Source: Publisher's Information Bureau
TMC:2/87

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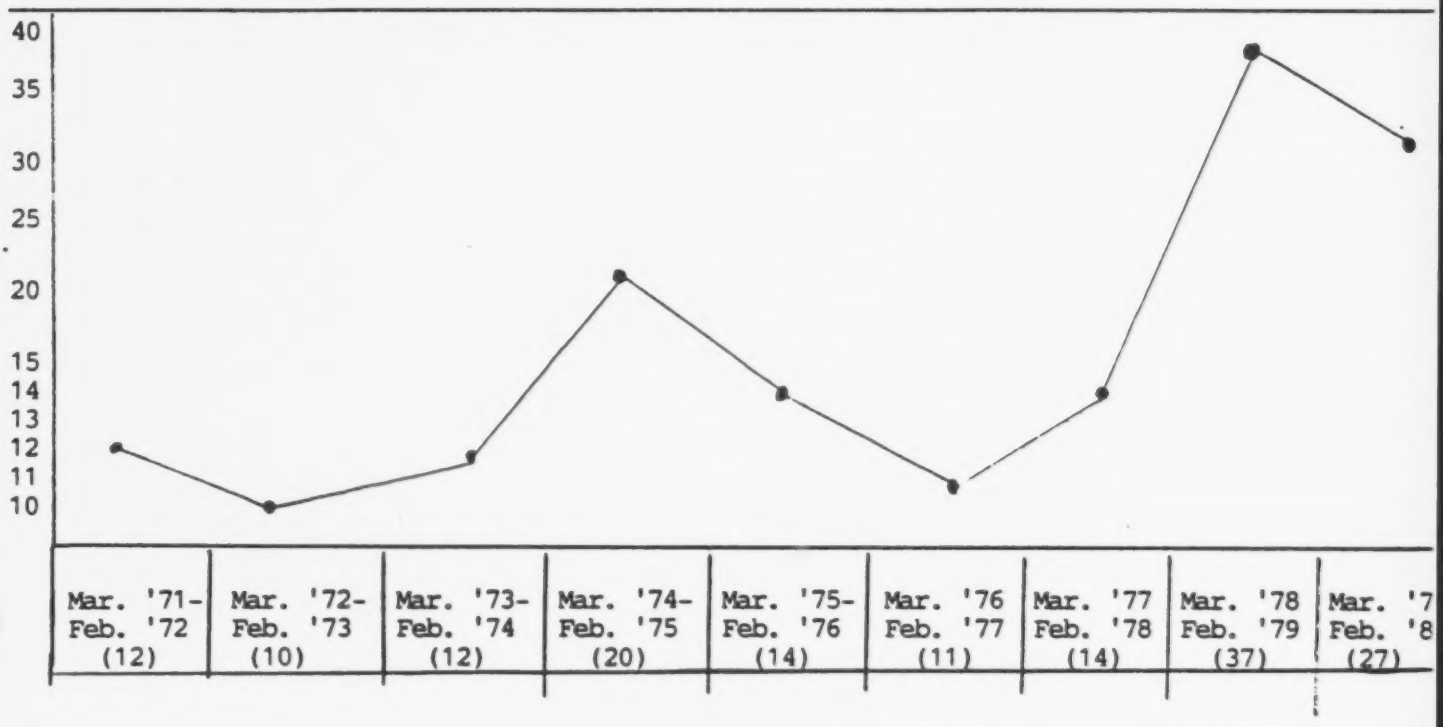
APPENDIX B

1972-1979

TOTAL ARTICLES LISTED IN READER'S GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE CITING THE DANGERS OF SMOKING **



**Does not include brief mentions of smoking within context of other articles. Also does not include satire or pro-smoking articles.

NOTES

1. J.J. O'Connor, "Women Top Cigarette Target?" Advertising Age, 28 September 1981, p. 2.

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4. Ernster, "Mixed Messages for Women," 339.

5. Newsweek, "Women Smokers: The Risk Factor," November 1985, 76,78.

6. Ibid.

7. Charles Cannell and James MacDonald, "The Impact of Health News on Attitudes and Behavior," Journalism Quarterly, Volume 33, 1956, p. 315.

8. John Mack Carter, Good Housekeeping editor-in-chief, New York City, telephone interview, October 1985.

9. Ralph Izard, Ohio University, "Issue of Journalistic Ethics," survey sponsored and published by the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, 1983.

10. Vicki Hesterman, "Consumer Magazines and Ethical Standards," paper presented to the natioal convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 1986.

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12. Kristan C. Dale, "ACSH Survey: Which Magazines Report the Hazards of Smoking?" ACSH News and Views, May/June 1982, 8.

13. Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, March 1971-February 1980 (New York: H.W. Wilson Company).

14. Mina Mulvey, Good Housekeeping executive editor, New York City, telephone interview, 29 May 1986.

15. Carter, telephone interview.

16. Ernster, "Mixed Messages for Women," p. 339.

17. Patrice Kelly, Seventeen Magazine public information, New York City, telephone interview, 29 May, 1986.

18. "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Advertising and Were Not Afraid to Ask," Ms., November 1974, p. 58.

19. Ibid., p. 90.

20. Ibid., p. 92.

21. Ibid., p. 58.

22. Ibid.

23. Gloria Steinem, special report, Ms., November 1979, p. 6.

24. Pat Carbine, Ms. editor and publisher, New York City, telephone interview, 2 June 1986.

25. Tony Diadato, Cosmopolitan tobacco and alcohol advertising salesman, New York City, telephone interview, 30 May 1986.

26. Barbara Creaturo, Cosmopolitan acquiring editor, New York City, 30 May, 1986.

27. S.J. Baran and V.J. Blasko, "Social Perception and the By-Products of Advertising," Journal of Communication, Summer 1984, pp. 12-20.

28. Paine, "Smoking and Health", pp. 3, 11.

29. Newsweek, "Cigarette Ads: Round Two," 23 December 1985, p. 55.

30. Simon Chapman and Garry Egger, "Myth in Cigarette Advertising and Health Promotion," in Language, Image, Media, edited by Howard Davis and Paul Walton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p. 166.

31. Thomas Whiteside, "Selling Death," The New Republic, 27 March 1971, p. 16.

32. Janet Guyon, "Do Publications Avoid Anti-Cigarette Stories to Protect Ad Dollars?" Wall Street Journal, 22 November 1982, p. 1.

33. Ben Bagdikian, The Media Monopoly (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), pp. 170-171.

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35. Editor (name withheld) of major woman's magazine, New York City, telephone interview, 30 May 1986.

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Please also credit the following resource:

Fred K. Paine, Ph.D., and Nancy M. Paine, M.A., Magazines: A Bibliography for their Study, Scarecrow Press.

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END

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